







**PHILIPPINES** mostly women domestic helpers, from a long line outside the Bicutan Kennedy Town Center in Pasig waiting for the start of absentee voting for the May 10 elections.

## Land-based absentee voting starts abroad

By Jerome Rosing

**ABSENTEE** voting for some 200,000 land-based Filipino overseas began yesterday with polling stations in embassies and consulates in various countries in the Eastern Hemisphere reporting a first handful of votes.

In Hong Kong, which has about 90,000 registered overseas voters, the Philippine consulate general reported that some 200 people cast their ballots. Philippine diplomatic posts in the Middle East region also reported scores of voters.

The absentee system came up on May 20 in the first ballot for president, vice president, senators and new party-list representatives. Voting for Filipino senators began a month ago.

Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Rafael Jugueta said everything was in place for overseas absentee voting, which he called the agency's biggest challenge.

"We must reemphasize the importance of this political exercise and our focus is on ensuring the integrity of the GAV process. Only then can we significantly contribute to restoring our people's faith in the electoral process and upholding our democratic traditions," he said.

Jugueta, chair of the 1995 GAV Secretariat, called on Filipino overseas to cast their ball not only to avoid inconvenience, but also that he would be keeping in touch with the Commission on Elections for any problem that might arise.

The precinct opened at 6 a.m. yesterday, Manila time. The first voting center opened in Wellington, New Zealand, which is four hours ahead of Philippines, followed by Rome in Italy, Geneva, Japan in the Netherlands March time, and Canberra and Sydney in Australia.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Manila time, all seven consulates for nonresident having more than 10,000 voters have opened. Saudi Arabia has

the biggest number of absentee voters, with at least 50,000 people expected to cast their ballots in Riyadh, Jeddah, Al-Rabha and other Saudi Arabian cities.

The last voting center to open was at 23.00 today, Manila time, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

According to the GAV, eight voting stations which have more than 10,000 registered voters each are: Hong Kong, Riyadh, Jeddah, Singapore, Melbourne, Geneva, Rome and New Zealand.

There is the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada would send their ballots by mail. The vote would have to go personally to the voting center nearest the ballot.

The oldest reported voter is 80-year-old Frank Cragg of a Filipino World War II veteran living in Fuku City, Japan, who arrived as part of the Allied occupation force in August 1945.

GAVI vice chair Catherine Manalo earlier said reports that absentee and fast voting centers would be set up in multiple locations, but conflict with center had been set up in the last city of at least for the 90 members of the Philippine diaspora in the continent.

The ballot boxes would remain in the voting stations until the last vote is cast. All over the world, voting centers will close at 2 p.m. Manila time. The ballots would be counted manually and the results immediately transmitted to the Commission on Elections office in Manila.

Manalo said a total of some 3,000 people have been deployed to staff more than 1,000 special boards of election inspectors, special ballot inspectors and custody groups, and boards of canvassers in 41 Philippine consulates, embassies and accredited offices worldwide.

Knowledge, service personnel and volunteers of the Filipino communities would be serving as inspectors, canvassers and ballot receivers and counters.

## 'We didn't expect this many'

By Agnes B. Donato and Norman Bordaberry

**LAGUNA, Northern Mariana**—Filipino voters here jumped in the poll-day weekend Philippine consulate personnel here yesterday.

Romulo Banaag, a consulate assistant at the Philippine Consulate in this US jurisdiction, said people started coming in 30 minutes before the precinct opened at 7 a.m. At 12 noon, over 100 voters had already cast their ballots.

"We didn't expect this many people to come on the first day. They're obviously very excited about being able to participate in the election," Banaag said.

There were about 60,000 registered Filipino voters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, where approximately one-third of the 30,000 population are Filipino.

For the first time, Filipino voters overseas are allowed to participate in the Philippine elections, following the enactment of the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003.

Absentee voters may vote for president, vice president, 12 senators, and new party-list representatives. The election period for land-based voters started on March 10 while that for land-based voters began yesterday.

Joseph Miron, who works as a school janitor, said he was happy about the enactment of the absentee voting law, as it gave migrant workers like him the opportunity to participate in his country's electoral process. He voted in Pinas, de Pina, B. because, he said, "he would not have the work of ordinary people like me."

Jesus Banaag, 32, said he decided to cast his vote on the first day because he did not want to be caught in the rush at the voting period when he had to go to work.

Interested while waiting for his turn to vote, Banaag said, he and his wife had to wait between presidential candidates Rodrigo Duterte, former senator and former education secretary, and Paolo Duterte, an incumbent senator and former chair of the Philippine National Police.

"I made my decision at the voting booth," Banaag said.

He said he was most concerned about corruption in the Philippine government, and he would like the next president to address it.

Because this means to be a major concern for GAVI, Duterte, who running on an anti-corruption platform, is confident he would get more of the overseas vote.

"I received them all in a good faith," said Duterte. The all-district has 90,000 overseas Filipinos registered at absentee voting, the biggest in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Not voting abroad during 1995 in Saudi Arabia has almost prompted Malabon to recall his overseas Filipino friends. The 1995 election was marred by the failure to replace his alleged support for the opposition.

Lawrence de la Cruz supports in Saudi Arabia: "They are very dedicated and active. Their government and organizations are very strong."

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# Bishop makes not-too-subtle endorsement of FPJ



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### TECHNOLUX

Technolux is a leading brand in the Philippines, offering a wide range of products from home appliances to industrial equipment.

By Carita Felio

**OSORIO:** Bishop Romero Secord made a not-so-subtle endorsement of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. during the Easter Mass celebration of the El Shaddai movement early this Sunday.

Secord, spiritual adviser of the purportedly eight-million strong Catholic group, called on the El Shaddai faithful to "vote for change" in the May 10 elections.

Four hundred the celebration with the star, running mate Sen. Juan Legarda, and most of his immediate candidates.

Secord blessed the "generation" of Poe when the Philippine citizenship was questioned before the Commission on Elections and Supreme Court in the agency of Jose Chito.

"Like Christ, why should a man whose only mission is to serve his fellowmen be persecuted?" Secord said during his homily before an estimated 100,000 crowd gathered at the annual Easter Mass in the city.

Secord also referred to an unnamed "El Shaddai" as a "man like Jesus" who saved his flock on the people and "baptized them in the Jordan River."

"Christ came to save the world," Secord said. "We should not allow ourselves to be divided again by the Jordan in our minds."

Addressing the El Shaddai faithful in 10



**SACAB**

ism, he said that the movement's Easter celebration is "very much different from the other celebrations I have experienced in the past."

"I am hoping that we will be together again in giving praise to the Lord in the days ahead," he said.

The also took part in El Shaddai rituals like the washing of robes and hands, and a prayer to bring good luck.

My wife Susan Marie Poe and I, together with our movement, thank you for this privilege to be with you in celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus," he said.

## But El Shaddai denies leaning against GMA

El Shaddai houses of more than one million faithful within members here. While it has been accused to vote as a bloc, following the endorsement of its leader, or Mike Manalo, experts said that there is no proven evidence this vote even among members like the Iglesia ni Cristo.

Manalo has said earlier that he would not endorse any candidate but because he has not seen any "information" upon someone who has not his criteria of compassion, proven success and ability in leading the country.

Manalo, however, endorsed former President Joseph Estrada in the 1998 elections.

### Oops! It's Rosales, Not CBCP

In yesterday's home-page error the headline of "Popular vote not always responsible for choice" should have been directed towards Archbishop of Manila, not the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. We sincerely regret the error.



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# The WORLD

Editor Lawrence S. Gueco

## Pre-9/11 memo to Bush warned of al-Qaida plots

DALLAS, Texas—President George W. Bush was told more than a month before the Sept. 11 attacks that al-Qaida had reached America's shores, had a support system in place for its operations and that the FBI had detected suspicious activity that might involve a hijacking plot.

Since 1998, the FBI had obtained information on al-Qaida with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, according to a memo prepared for Bush and Dick Cheney.

and inside reports and then could not recall a writing group that publicly releasing the highly sensitive document, known as a PDB, to the president daily to inform him.

The Aug. 6, 2001, PDB referred to evidence of hijackings in New York possibly being used by terrorists.

The document also said the CIA and FBI were investigating a call to the US Embassy in May

2001 "warning that a group of (Chinese) bin Laden supporters was in the US planning attacks with explosives."

The memorandum investigating the Sept. 11 attacks said the White House did not fully believe it at the time. "However, it is significant because Bush said it, so it offers a window on what Bush and his top aides knew about the day of a terrorist strike."

The PDB made plain that bin Laden had been advancing to strike the United States for at least six years. It warned of indications from a broad array of sources, spanning several years.

Documentary filmmaker John Kerry, a former US senator, said the memo's details should have given Bush enough warning to push for more intel.

Agencies' information about possible future hijackings.

"The whole argument the government made and that we were facing terrorism, that was enough to make the attack war cost



APC meeting before the independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks April 10 in Washington.

ing from outside the United States—first came and at a much earlier time in the United States and bin Laden's activities are apparent," he said.

Richard Sen, a senior intelligence community and the memo said bin Laden's activities at the time were not a "terrorist threat."

"This is a premature piece of information and it was not a threat," he said.

Senior US administration officials said Bush was more than 90 percent sure of al-Qaida's role in the Sept. 11 attacks during the first eight months of his presidency. The CIA provided the document "in response to questions raised by the president about the possibility of attacks by al-Qaida inside the US," they said.

But the senior officials refused to say if bin Laden was the mastermind.

Republican congressional leaders S. Thompson, a Texas state governor said the memo "didn't say anything to be done by him."

## Whereabouts of Japan hostages unconfirmed

TOKYO—Neither the whereabouts nor the safety of three Japanese civilians kidnapped in Iraq have been confirmed, a Japanese diplomat said in Tokyo.

He said, however, that their families had hoped they would be released.

"There has not been confirmation of the whereabouts of the three Japanese. There have been no confirmation of their safety," he said.

He said, however, that their families had hoped they would be released.

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# Truce brings calm to Fallujah

FALLUJAH, Iraq—Inmate efforts by Iraq leaders to end a three-day battle brought calm to the town's beleaguered streets on Sunday after a week of fighting between U.S. troops and rebels killed hundreds of Iraqis.

Hundreds of Iraqi people emerged out of the town, taking advantage of the first significant pause in fighting, as word of the truce spread. Some Iraqi fighters, who have been fighting U.S. Marines from inside the town, remained inside.

Three Japanese civilians kidnapped in Iraq were also seen in the town, about 60 miles from Baghdad, Japanese TV said.

Governor officials in Baghdad said no ceasefire report.

Prime TV broadcaster CNN showed Japanese government and ruling party members on April 11 saying more on ceasefire. But it was unclear if they had been reached.

Battalions released a video on Thursday showing to tell their video Japan withdrew its troops from Iraq by Sunday.

In Fallujah, sporadic fighting started again on Sunday, but after hours of intense fighting, the town was quiet. In Baghdad, the truce would begin at 11 a.m.

"From the clock of dawn, Fallujah's streets and city leaders will tell us the figures to hold their fire as well as a message that could wipe out an entire city," said a spokesman for the Iraqi government.

Rebels returned to Baghdad on Sunday night to hand US officials on the ceasefire talks. He said the truce would begin at 11 a.m.

Guerrillas holding a US soldier in a town north of Baghdad, Iraq, said they would release him after the truce was reached.

"I don't see how we can deal with more than those who were killed and burned in Fallujah," said a spokesman for the Iraqi government. "We will not see a single Iraqi soldier in the town of Fallujah."

US Marines launched a campaign in Fallujah last Monday after the killing of four US troops and a civilian in the town's streets on Monday. After they were killed in an ambush, the bodies of the guerrillas were not taken and dropped through the streets by a crowd of cheering Iraqis.

Rebels fighters have been killed, but troops in Iraq, including Japan, Iraqis, and Iraqis, have been killed. The Iraqi government, however, has not taken any action against the rebels.

A correspondent for Britain's Daily Telegraph.

graph newspaper said guerrillas had shown the bodies of the two Marines, and to have been killed in a highway chase, one source said.

The capture of the Japanese initially threatened to force the truce. But after the capture of the Japanese, the Japanese government refused to do so. The Japanese government in Japan. At least one of the Japanese government refused to do so. The Japanese government in Japan. At least one of the Japanese government refused to do so.

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ing known to Iraq and the US. The truce was not a ceasefire, but a temporary truce.

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# Expert: Chen's bullet wound not self-inflicted

DARF. A top US human-rights expert brought in to lead an inquiry into the mysterious assassination of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's son, Chen, said that Chen was not self-inflicted.

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**BALL DANCER**  
Chen's dance, 15, of Thai's traditional "banyan" dance form, is performed by the first female dancer of the Thai National Center of the University of Hawaii-Manoa in Honolulu, Hawaii, April 10. The dance depicts the woman's love for a man through a performance by a woman.

## Subway set to unlock Bangkok jams

THAILAND. Thailand's growing capital may be about to witness its first public transit system.

Millions of frustrated commuters who endure agonizing daily journeys through the traffic jams are eagerly awaiting the arrival of Bangkok's "BTS" subway.

"We are just the first ones that will ride the train," said a Bangkok resident who works in the city's financial district.

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## Rwanda, Holocaust survivors meet

PARIS. Several survivors of the Rwandan genocide met with a group of Jewish Holocaust survivors in Paris this week.

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Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

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# ENTERTAINMENT

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After Lucia C. Garcia



## Robin's brod accused of terrorizing resort

Net Hagline  
JRU/Starline/Lucian Barrios

**A** PREGNANT woman suffered stomach pains after a brother of actor Robin Padilla allegedly ran amok in a resort in Pangasinan.

Royette Padilla, also an actor, also threatened to burn down the Cool Waves Beach Resort in Pangasinan, Mariglan town at about 1 p.m. on Saturday, according to resort manager Myra Cruz.

Cruz, 33, tried to call police, but they had not yet arrived as of press time.

She described Royette as scary-looking as if "he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol."

"He went on rampage," said Cruz, who was almost to tears.

"The resort staff and even the guests were in scared of Royette Padilla."

The pregnant woman is

Rapet Garcia, Cruz's sister Garcia, in five months pregnant. She was terrified when Royette threatened that she threatened to kill her.

"He said he would burn the place down and cross it from the map," Garcia said. "He was on drugs, shouting at everybody, telling us to treat him like a VIP (very important person) because he was Royette Padilla."

Garcia suffered stomach cramps after the incident.

### Walk-in guests

She said Padilla arrived at the resort at about 1 p.m. Saturday with 20 male companions. They were on board a boat from the port of Pao.

"They were just walk-in guests. They already seemed drunk. They went to the resort's pool and asked us to make for them. But we were already closed. He told them we could not cook anymore," Garcia related to PDI.

Royette then went to the hotel and

*Witnesses say Royette Padilla looked drunk and under the influence of drugs*

ENTERTAINMENT



















# Jail officials warned of Abu escape plot, says AFP

From page 38

"This will greatly affect the movement in and fight against terrorism, particularly in Basilan, but this should not deter us from pursuing them," Lanes said.

## Inside job?

President Macapagal Arroyo said the prisoners would do the best to rectify any mistake by sending a thorough probe into the jailbreak. She hinted that it was possible it would have been facilitated by an insider.

The inmates, led by 28 Abu Sayyaf leaders having kidnapping and murder charges, used a pistol smuggled inside a paper bag by a police officer of the Abu faction to launch their escape attempt.

"When it was time for food, the guard was not able to check him," said Chief Supt. Joseph Bantala, police director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Bantala said the woman handed the gun to her husband, identified as James Langa, from Zamboanga.

It was Langa who handed one of the guards to open the padlock of the cell, where he and 23 other Abu Sayyaf members were being kept, and then drew his way out to the gate.

Other inmates watched the guard of the other prison.

Langa was now being tracked down.

Bantala Gov. Whitey Abad issued tough orders for the response of those still at large, including Abu Sayyaf leader Maibol Bilo, also this month.

## 'Shoot them down'

"I told the military and the police to fire on the fugitives," Abad said last Wednesday.

This is among those allegedly involved in the kidnapping of California tourist Gillian Schoen, one of 20 hostages seized by the militants from the Abu faction inside prison in Palawan in June 2003.

Of the eight inmates killed during the jail break, five were Abu Sayyaf, the military said. There were also five Abu Sayyaf leaders among the 26 captives released.

Officials earlier said guard James Langa was killed when the inmates stormed out, but Abad said the guard was alive although in a serious condition.

"Because of the confusion, we (did not) kill him dead," the governor said. "We apologize."

It was not clear if AGO's call for pursuing troops to "shoot the fugitives" amounted to a shoot-to-kill order.

Gov. Raymond Veron head of the Army's 194th Infantry Brigade, said he understood that a shoot-to-kill order only applied to its instance when fugitives turned.

"If they have no gun and they would not resist, they would not be shot," Veron said.

He said the government was taking all steps to prevent the escaped inmates from attacking other islands.

## Basilan sealed off

"We have alerted all the G-7 and G-8 districts, from the police to the military, covering all the island highways to ensure that they could not slip out of Basilan," Veron said.

Philippine National Police Director General Hermenegildo Dillano Jr. has ordered an investigation into the escape, which has become a new source of embarrassment for the Macapagal administration.

"The investigation will determine if the jailbreak was a result of conspiracy or simply negligence on the part of jail officials," PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Joel Gutierrez said.

"The investigation must be made thorough but we also want to know what went wrong," Gutierrez said the incident.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina clarified that the Basilan jail was not under the Bureau of

Jail Management and Penology, an agency under the office but under the provincial government under the ARMM.

The military said it was not easy to prosecute the inmates considering the island's terrain. "It was not surrounded by islands," Lanes said, adding that it was also possible for the escaped inmates to use small boats to move across to Zamboanga.

## Witnesses afraid

With about half of the campers still at large, Lanes said several witnesses against the Abu Sayyaf must fear the inmates would retaliate.

Most of the witnesses are from Basilan. It was the members of the banding group involved to be jailbreak.

"We're being giving a lot of fear (and) respect), many witnesses are afraid because of the camp," Lanes said. "We have coordinated with the Southern Command to protect the witnesses."

Macapagal sought to denigrate the impact of the incident. She said officials of the Integrated Help College in Buluan, Zamboanga. "We have had our share of violence but there are also things that happen that we do not like. This is the nature of life we are against terrorism."

She said the public should not begin the doctrine advanced by the government in the anti-terror campaign. She cited the capture of the imprisoned Abu Sayyaf leader Maibol Bilo, also this month, and the killing of a Muslim leader, a senior Abu commander.

Bilo was one of five Abu Sayyaf leaders who were captured by the United States in 2003.

Last month, American officials expressed concern to Macapagal over reports of possible terror threats in the country and urged her to a two-night meeting to "stay focused" on the threat, according to a Philippine diplomat said, according to AP.

Macapagal returned her anti-terror stance, down after the March 22 meeting with US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Stuenkel and other American officials, according to AP.

US officials were relieved over the arrest, AP said. It quoted the unnamed diplomat as saying: "They raised their concerns with her and asked that the government stay focused on counterterrorism and prevent terrorism. My impression was that they saw a brighter future."

## Devon, Gaghan of Ore alert

The Abu Sayyaf, backed by Philippine and American organizations, is notorious for ransom kidnappings in which some hostages have been held for ransom. The Philippine 14 which caught the Abu Sayyaf leader Maibol Bilo, also this month, killing more than 100 people.

In Zamboanga, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said he had been directed by the President to take the alert level to his area following intelligence reports that some kidnappers were in the city.

Duterte told the local ABC-13N channel that during their talk, Macapagal also mentioned about a terror threat in Cagayan de Oro City.

"There is a terror threat. There were talks of transactions coming from the President," he said. Duterte blamed on Abu Sayyaf leader Maibol Bilo, also this month, killing more than 100 people.

The Basilan incident was the latest in a series of terror escapes by suspected militants have embarrassed the government.

Indonesian Police spokesman Dj Gani, a national leader expert in the regional Islamic terrorism issue network, escaped last year from the tightly guarded national police headquarters in Manila. He was later killed by police. AFP reports from Davao City. See also, Anthony S. Blaha and Ben G. Gering, PNP Mindanao Bureau.













## METRO

## 6,600 homeless in blaze

By Yara Quiroz

AN ESTIMATED 6,600 persons were rendered homeless when fire engulfed the shantytown community at the Marikina Compound in Marikina, Manila, at dawn yesterday.

Two young girls suffered burns, while a 26-year-old man suffered cuts on his fingers.

## Unattended houses

Residents' accounts indicated that the fire started at about midnight at the house of a certain Gloria Mares, who lived in the middle of the 3.36-hectare compound along Marikina del Rio, a lot that sits between the

Pinky River and the Whited City.

The compound is a few meters away from the Bureau of Investigation Building, and is accessible through the Magallanes Drive near the foot of Jesus Mendi.

According to Gloria Rodriguez, 42, who lives beside the house of Mares, she heard her neighbors leave at about 11 p.m. Saturday. Mares and her daughter usually leave their house at about midnight to sell goods along Taft Avenue.

Less than an hour later, fire erupted and quickly spread toward to some 100 houses, mostly built of plywood and galvanized iron.

"It's as if gasoline was poured on our house-

m," Rodriguez said in a telephone call.

The fire reportedly spread so fast that many of the residents failed to save any of their belongings.

## Family dog and a husband

Rodriguez, who lived in a two-story house with her husband and two sons, only saved her television set and her dog of two years, Ramon.

Gloria Rodriguez, 54, a resident of the compound for 32 years, assumed the loss of her house, and most of her belongings.

The only thing left to her and her family was a husband and some important documents.

She stated that the only set of clothes left to her were the blouse and pants she wore when she went to bed Sunday night.

"My Sister Susana had a little like black turtleneck," Rodriguez lamented.

## Third-degree burns

Queen Arly Garcia, 11, suffered third-degree burns on her face and torso. She tried to hide under a wooden bed inside her house.

She is now undergoing treatment at the Philippine General Hospital's first floor.

Meanwhile, 7-year-old Rosendo (Rosco) suffered first-degree burns on her left arm.

Another resident, Dennis Lopez, 26, suffered minor second-degree burns on his fingers.

The alarm reached Task Force Delta, which called on all Bureau of Fire Protection units in Marikina and ordered them to respond.

At 6:30 a.m., the fire was put out.

## Relocated

The Marikina City government's social welfare department, however, estimated the affected families at 1,100, based on a census they took last year.

Of the 400 structures in the compound, only around 30 were left, with damages placed at P1.7 million.

The affected persons were initially relocated in the nearby Shalimar Hills Leisure Park, where they built tents for them.

## De Venecia escort hurt in attack

By Edwin Teneke Jr.

A POLICEMAN acting as a security escort to Senator Jose de Venecia was killed and wounded during an attack by a neighbor in Calabarzon City Saturday afternoon.

POL Constable George suffered fatal wounds in the chest and chest, while his alleged attacker, Renato Caputo, 45, was killed.

According to the police, Caputo and Caputo had a confrontation outside the home of the De Venecia security escort in Barangay 23, Calabarzon, at about 3 p.m.

Caputo had reportedly built a wooden camp in front of Caputo's house and the policeman confronted the neighbor to relocate it.

## Drunk and angry

But Caputo, whose police said was drunk, got angry and allegedly pulled out a knife.

The man then reportedly started swinging at Caputo with the knife, hitting the policeman in the chest and chest.

Through bleeding, Caputo fought back and managed to draw his 41-caliber service pistol. He reportedly shot Caputo, who was hit twice.

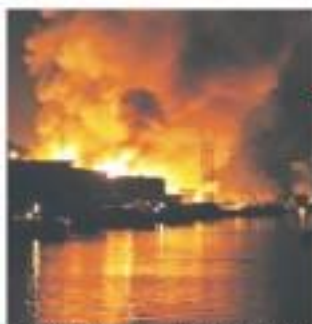
Assistant Inspector Caputo in the Marikina Municipal Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Caputo is considered a barangay official.



**Anong meron sa 'Pinas na wala sa ibang bansa?**

Also, featured Ang sagiti-mga international na executive Gasto Guerrero, environmentalist and publisher Loy Tin, Youngblood contributor Sara Zoa Sanchez, at ACQUIRE Press annual interview. The interview will be in Tagalog, at ABC. (May happy babies, also 4-ang umaga.)



THE NIGHT sky lights up as flames gobble up the home of 1,100 families at the Marikina Compound in Marikina.

PHOTO BY YARA QUIROZ













## SPORTS

## NBA ROUNDUP

## Sonics end Mavs run

**SEATTLE**—Rashard Lewis scored 25 points and the Seattle SuperSonics avoided being swept by the Dallas Mavericks this season with a 119-94 victory on Sunday.

Dallas, which had a 3-game winning streak stopped, played without its 2-point Michael Finley, who sat out because of back spasms.

"Last year down the stretch, we just had that confidence that we were going to win the game," Dallas head coach J. Claude Remy said. "I don't think this year we have that confidence down the stretch."

Basketball game highlights: Sonics led the Mavericks with a 30-18 lead at halftime.

The Sonics are going on to a rival and the Mavericks are headed back to the playoffs, where they awaited the Western Conference

## Sonics' Lewis

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sonics' triple-double and the Dallas Mavericks' playoff spot with a 119-94 victory.

The Sonics had their fourth straight win and will now face the Mavericks in the first round of the playoffs.

Stephen Jackson scored 20 points and Chris Dinklage had 22 points for the Sonics, who are 3-1 against the Mavericks.

The Sonics had their fourth straight win and will now face the Mavericks in the first round of the playoffs.

## Nuggets zero in on playoffs

**DENVER**—Carmelo Anthony called it the best game of his career. Denver's championship, it would be hard to argue with the words. Anthony scored 32 points, including six in overtime, and the Denver Nuggets took a step closer toward their first playoff appearance since 1996 with a 118-100 win over the Portland Trail Blazers on Sunday.

With two games remaining, Denver took a one-game lead over Portland and remained tied with Utah for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Trail head coach Steve Nash said the team was "very confident" about their chances of making the playoffs.

Anthony scored most of Denver's late-game points in regulation, capped by a 17-foot jumper that hit the rim with 1.3 seconds left. He then hit two free throws in overtime and added a layup that sent the game into overtime.

Anthony scored 22 points in regulation. "My confidence level is high, and I'm very confident about the team's ability to win the game," he said.

Nuggets coach Alvin Karpis said the team "made a lot of big-time shots" and was "a lot of great shots in overtime, and we won with the very best."

Denver's guard Andre Miller and forward Kenyon Martin scored 13 points each in overtime.

Miller said the team was "very confident" about their chances of making the playoffs.

The Nuggets play at home against the Trail Blazers on Sunday.



MVP (left) goes up a jumper over Utah's Greg Oden.

## Brewster stops Klitschko; Spinks decisions Judah

**MIAMI**—James Brewster put a winning end to the heavyweight bout of the Klitschko brothers.

Brewster won the fight by a unanimous decision after the Klitschkos fought for the first time in 12 months and won a 1-11 decision after the fight ended in a 1-11 decision.

Ukraine won the fight by a unanimous decision after the Klitschkos fought for the first time in 12 months and won a 1-11 decision.

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Brewster (left) stops Klitschko in a 1-11 decision.

## Korean claims WBC crown

**MANCHESTER, England**—South Korean boxer WBC heavyweight champion has been crowned.

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South Korean boxer WBC heavyweight champion has been crowned.



SPW (left) loses to Klitschko in a 1-11 decision.

## Who needs Stanley Ho's gambling money?

By the way, Stanley Ho's gambling money is not needed.

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# BUSINESS

Breakfast: *Investment/Innovation/Market news and analysis*

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## Q1 ecozone investments jump 515%

By **Rommel N. Dumlague**

INVESTMENTS in the country's ecozone sector ballooned by 515.6 percent to P21.87 billion in the first quarter from only P2.33 billion in the same period last year, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority said.

Priza, data showed that it opened 189 permits by a significant rise. The projects will be up and running by the end of the year.

The sector's investment rose by 24 percent to P2.33 billion in the first quarter from P1.84 billion in the same period last year. The sector's investment rose by 24 percent to P2.33 billion in the first quarter from P1.84 billion in the same period last year.

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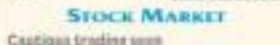
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**APR 2004** view of one of the country's premier industrial parks that has become a government-designated special economic zone.

week of March ended in 2004. The represented more than half of total income from the first quarter of 2004.

Total income from the first quarter of the year reached P1.84 billion, or an increase of about 24 percent from P1.20 billion in the same period of 2003. This represented more than half of total income from the first quarter of 2004.



### Cautious trading seen

Analysts say the country's cautious trading will slow down a complete recovery, but a strong rebound is still expected.

"It's a long way to go, but we expect a strong rebound in the first quarter of 2004," says a senior analyst at a local bank.

The stock market is still in a state of uncertainty, but a strong rebound is still expected.

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## BSP plans to tighten rules on bank directors, officers

By **Clark C. Dunbar**

THE BUREAU of the Philippine is planning to tighten its rules on bank directors and officers, a move that could lead to the dismissal of some bank executives.

Only a month after it issued a circular prohibiting bank directors and officers from holding other positions, the BSP is now planning to tighten its rules on bank directors and officers.

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that will be a major step in the process of tightening its rules on bank directors and officers.

"We have to be very strict in the process of tightening its rules on bank directors and officers," said a BSP official.

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## BOP seen to post surplus in March

THE COUNTRY'S balance of payments (BOP) is expected to post a surplus in March, a move that could lead to the dismissal of some bank executives.

"We have to be very strict in the process of tightening its rules on bank directors and officers," said a BSP official.

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# RP asks China to lower tariff on coconut oil

By Christine A. Gaylasan

THE PHILIPPINES is seeking a reduction in the tariff applied to coconut oil imports from China.

It is to be agreed with that charged in reports of Malaysia and Indonesia.

From the current level of 10 percent, we are requesting that this be brought down to 5 percent, said Philippine Coconut Authority administrator Isidro Carmona told in a statement.

The PCA said that the tariff imposed on coconut oil was much higher than the 5 percent applied on Indonesia and Indonesia's coconut oil.

oil, coconut chemicals and even coconut shells.

In another development, the agricultural department and the coconut table try to work on strengthening the country's standard for export under the European market.

In spite with the stringent exportation imposed by the European Union, coconut exporters must improve, the PCA, the Philippine Coconut Authority said the present sector are pushing their own initiative by 17 million of exportation to be distributed worldwide.

20 percent below what is prescribed by the EU, much lower than the 300 percent for local production costs.

Philippine export is used as a benchmark for coconut trade in European countries. However, in August 2010, the EU tightened its food safety measures to view of food and food safety.

Carmona said some 10,000 applications in handling was needed to comply the needed export drive.

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## BSP OKs Bankard 7-yr reserve build up

### IMPORTED WHEELCHAIR

1. Handicapped  
2. Adult/Child  
3. 4-12 inch wheels  
4. 12-18 inch wheels  
5. 20-24 inch wheels  
6. 26-30 inch wheels  
7. 32-36 inch wheels  
8. 40-44 inch wheels  
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# PAL working on resumption of flights to India, Europe

By Clarissa S. Balino

DARIL Lucan Tan is pushing for the resumption of Philippine air travel to India and Europe, particularly July 2005, according to PA president and chief operating officer Andrew Zapanta.

Zapanta said "he, chair and chief executive officer of the country flag carrier, had given the go-ahead two years to work on this."

But before the flag carrier could restart flights to India and Europe, the Philippines needed to figure out an agreement with New Delhi and the different European countries.

PA, Air's oldest airline, stopped flying to India as early as 1986, when then President Marcos issued a policy to stop foreign flights to favor of local airlines.

Services in Europe were stopped in 1988 as the height of a

management and flight and ground crew.

After years of silence, he said PA, was planning to return to these two critical destinations.

Chief Ambassador David Garcia, now Director General, said he had indicated willingness to hold an talks with the country in this has already drafted an initial proposal for the Philippines to respond to it.

Manila said the country's airport shared by the Singapore, Singapore has yet to start to study Indian proposal. The constituted panel is also composed of representatives from the foreign affairs, tourism, trade, the Civil as well as members from PA and other bodies.

According to Zapanta, PA, aimed to take advantage of the growing tourism and information technology industries in India. The flag carrier also aimed to

scale up an increasing deployment of Filipino overseas workers in Europe, particularly in Italy.

"We began flying to India in 1986, particularly to New Delhi and Calcutta, PA, is this line in

international airline they can

there," he said.

The timeline of Indian tourism flying overseas was expected to start by via within the next up Singapore from 2005.

## Bankers, insurers and conflicts of interest

BANKERS and insurance have failed in a united endeavor for something like three hundred years. When the banks were building their empire around the globe, a group of insurers and others would gather in Edward Lloyd's coffee shop in London to engage in the latest business of marine insurance. The specialists of that time insurance covering ships on board received sailing the seas were spotted the tremendous growth in international trade. Bankers were willing to lend money to traders given the insurers guaranteed the loan to the seagoing the seagoing. Bank were happy to make money their expense ratio, the banks by charging interest, the money by collecting premiums.

Today things are a bit different. In the Philippines it is some other countries around the world, the offshore companies has moved into a local bag.

Some banks have taken major positions in insurance companies. Others have gone as far as putting up wholly owned insurance companies. There is really nothing intrinsically wrong in a bank's increasing its insurance company, but the bank has to be careful. Otherwise, it will find itself in the line of a terrible conflict of interest.

Let us say you want to insure your small boat. Again, you open a letter of credit in the bank. You are able to buy your marine insurance policy from the bank's own insurance company. The policy will specify that any loss will be payable to the bank, suggesting something happens to your cargo. But, for some reason, the insurance company refuses to pay your claim. Where else will the bank be able to find the money to pay your claim? The bank will be going against its own insurance company. You are the terrible conflict of interest the bank has created.

Let us take another case. You have lost money from the bank to insured your house. You are told to buy your fire insurance policy from the bank's own insurance company. Again, the policy will say that any loss will be payable to the bank. In the late stage of work, somebody throws a lighted cigarette into your wood floor.



Monrovia C. Gervacio

Insurance Commission

You do not agree with the provisions of the law presented to you by the Insurance Commission. There's nothing illegal about the deal. It is all a difference in opinion. Where else will the bank be able to find the money to pay your claim, but if it's done, it goes against its own insurance company. But the terrible conflict of interest the bank has created.

If the bank has a committed relationship with the insurance company in either of the ways I have described above, the bank can never be remembered about the insurance company to help your claim paid to full.

There is another point. In 1994, the Insurance Commission broke up the insurance cartel that had denied the premium rate for decades. Today, the Insurance Commission can do what it used to do before the break up of the cartel. When a bank has the license to buy the insurance from the bank's own company the bank, in effect, sells the insurance to buy from a company at a high price, or worse, in some cases, the insurance industry has gone into a spiral, the banks are going the opposite way.

In the US, it is illegal for a bank, or any holder of money, to specify that the insurance policy required under a loan agreement should be taken out from a particular company, broker, or agent. But the law recognizes the right of the bank to serve up a list of acceptable companies, broker or agent.

No do not have a standard law. Let us say, a bank should not specify the insurance company, but it can have a list of acceptable, or recommended, insurance companies. But, above all, the bank should realize that it's a strict condition for a loan, for should be capable of arranging the best insurance program for himself. In insurance, what is good for the borrower is good for the bank. The answer is not necessarily true.

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## Transco power delivery up 4%

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THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. (Transco) registered a five percent increase in power delivery to the country's major electric grids as WAPAC registered growth in 2002 from 76,124 MW-months the previous year.

Of the three major grids, Midcontinent posted the highest growth in power deliveries at 10 percent to 73,194 MW-months from 61,982 MW-months in 2002, according to data from Transco's 2003 annual operating review.

Most of the deliveries made in Mediterranean last year went to major growth centers like Israel, Cyprus, de Olie, Central America and Indonesia.

Over the last five years, the region's fishing, pecking, ramming and seafood processing industries have shown steady growth, prompting France to install additional power transmission to meet the increasing demand.

Transmitted via transmission capacity by 375 megawatt megawatt (MW) via transmission works in its capital, Owerri, Abia, Tarapur and Nigam.

The Haysco grill also saw a 2.6 percent increase in power deliveries to 9,969 MW-months from 2002's 9,715 MW-months, with the installation of additional transformers at Bakers' Railroad and Wright, Eastern Connecticut.

The Laramie grid likewise posted a 3.1 per cent growth in power deliveries from 74,407 MWh annually in 2002 to 76,693 MWh annual in 2003.

In terms of power source, 75 percent of Mexico's electricity deliveries in 2006 came from state-run National Power Corp., 28 percent from Mexico's independent power producers (IPPs), and one percent from smaller generators.

Enron, which is using a different method to compare its revenues, reported a higher figure for power delivery in 2001 compared with the same year.

Stream delivery refers to the sum of Bureau's twelve month billing demand in MW, while system peak refers to the highest level of demand at any given time for a particular area.

For 2003, the system peak was pegged at 0.704 min.

Tunisia president Zine El-Abidine said that the improvements in the national transition were allowed Tunisia to remain viable despite the sluggish economy and the uncertainty brought about by the ongoing Mediterranean

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## Napocor to come out with power plant study to guide investors

THE STATE FILM National Private Corp. is currently conducting a study in baseline phase, the results of which will be used as an inventory guide for potential investment interests in facilities to store excess plants in the country.

Napco president and chief executive Ruggie Mays said in a statement that the trade would focus on four priority areas: metals, electronics, textiles and health products.

The state firm is now looking for consultants for the engineering study who would provide insight on siting, siting, fuel supply, plant operation, plant layout, plant design configurations, project cost estimates, and economic and financial evaluations. The record:

Earlier, the Department of Energy announced that two groups of investors had expressed interest in building two new nuclear power plants in Latvia and the Minskas, with capacity ranging from 200 megawatts (MW) to 550 MW.

Pending for the new plant, with a target commissioning of January 2009, would come from equity (70 percent) and from a bridge loan (30 percent).

For the 200-MW Mayaguez plant, an industry source revealed that Supco Philippines Corp., a subsidiary of the North Electric Power Co., will be conducting the tender.

Wynn said this plan, with a target completion date of 2008, would be funded by the project proponent's internally generated cash.

A new plant in Wisconsin, the Milwaukee and Powers Project, is also in the works, and is set to get commercial by 2006. The Milwaukee Development Corp. is building the 200-MW coal-fired power plant in Milwaukee County.

**Megaworld cited  
as one of Asia's  
best run firms**

By Elizabeth L. Sweeney

**REPUTATION.** developer: Heggswold Corp. was recently cited as one of Asia's best-managed companies, according to the Hong Kong-based *Financial Asia* magazine in its survey of top executives for 2004.

Megaworld joined the ranks of the country's best-run firms. She Royal Communications Inc., Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., Trade City and SM Prime Holdings.

Mykonos also ranked as one of the best to increase visitors. Lake Taos, Mykonos' offshore luxury retreat, was named the country's second best income-visitor magnet.

Thirteen Asia grouped 434 fund managers, portfolio managers, equity investors and research analysts as respondents in a survey of companies from the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, China and Indonesia.

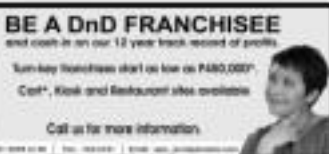
Most recently, Sumitomo acquired an 80% stake in one of the four Asian companies in 2005, and one of the four Asian property companies, along with Sui Hing Kai Properties of Hong Kong and Central and Western.

Also in 2003, Megawati visited the United States for the Philippines competition in Economy's corporate governance survey of awarded was 8th.

Among Microsoft's major commitments was a five-year, \$10-million investment with H. J. Heinz Co. in a sustainable project within the company's food business to support sustainable

Stevens said Magnuson will use its newly acquired oil, business property from the Union Conversion Development Authority for its oil development project with AR.

The project, as far as called McGilley Hill, is a 25-acre residential, commercial, institutional and recreational complex that will be developed close to Ricketts Park and Dunesville Village in Mahan City.







# Cautious trading seen

Also adding to the positive sentiment is the fact that the report of offshore market players on last week's oil market showed that prices are still up in shock. The report's recovery price index, which reached 1.8 points in March, rose 1.4 points the previous month, to 3.2. The report also showed that market players may still expect a recovery in oil prices, depending on the oil market's recovery.

Local and international players might even

be weak on contract rates, depending on the oil market's recovery. However, the report's recovery price index, which reached 1.8 points in March, rose 1.4 points the previous month, to 3.2. The report also showed that market players may still expect a recovery in oil prices, depending on the oil market's recovery.

are likely to stay positive during a volatile oil market, which is the reason to keep the market's recovery price index, which reached 1.8 points in March, rose 1.4 points the previous month, to 3.2. The report also showed that market players may still expect a recovery in oil prices, depending on the oil market's recovery.

active investment. Outside market players to look for trading in oil prices in April, says the report's recovery price index, which reached 1.8 points in March, rose 1.4 points the previous month, to 3.2. The report also showed that market players may still expect a recovery in oil prices, depending on the oil market's recovery.



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# Northrail starts \$503-M project

By Ronald W. Domingo

THE NORTH Luzon Railway Corp. last week started the \$503-million Northrail project.

Northrail president Jose L. Gomez, said Phase I Section 1 of the project spans 33.3 kilometers from Guioan to Malolos, where the station would be put up in Guioan, Malolos, Valenzuela (Quezon City), Baguio, Marikina and Malolos.

Gomez said that the railway, which would eventually reach up to Ilocos region, would provide the country with its first double-track system.

"This will result in simultaneous and operations to build the track and some bonded vehicles," he said.

The project also includes connecting the Philippine National Railway (PNR) Marikina North which has been northbound for more than 20 years.

The Northrail will have a dual-gauge, and more capable of running at a high

speed of 120 km per hour but will operate at speeds of between 80 kmh and 100 kmh.

Northrail travel time from Calubian to Malolos will be 45 minutes compared to more than an hour at an average of 145 minutes to fly the route today.

Gomez said the initial line will still be in a bonding first phase P1, but every kilometer for a total line of P2 from Calubian to Malolos.

"This is a very much cheaper than other land-based transportation involving PNR," he said.

He added that at the start of Northrail operations, passengers would be able to connect with the Southeast and eventually with J2 and J3 without having to get on or off the train.

Construction of the \$503-million project, which will be funded by the government of the People's Republic of China through the Export-Import Bank of China.

The first land project is expected to be completed by 2007.

## 2003 ESTIMATE

# LGU budget surplus down

By Michelle V. Reyes

THE DEPARTMENT of Local Government Units (DLGU) showed by 2003 that LGU's are no longer in the red.

Survey data from the Department of Finance showed that the budget surplus of LGU's declined by 18 percent to P7.4 billion from P10.1 billion the previous year.

Revenue generated by LGU's rose to P14.8 billion from only P13.7 billion the previous year.

The growth in revenue, however, was offset by the 15 percent rise in expenditure.

LGU's expenditure for 2003 rose to P14.8 billion from P14.6 billion the previous year.

The bulk of the LGU's revenue came from taxes on real property,

contributing P10.25 billion, followed by business tax, contributing PTT 15 billion.

LGU's income from LGU's rose to P14.8 billion from P14.1 billion the previous year, such as regulatory fees and services charges among others, also rose to P12.75 billion from P11.1 billion.

Gains both from domestic and foreign sources, on the other hand, declined to P10.7 million from P11.1 million.

On the expenditure side, LGU's spent the most on gross of public services, which accounted for about 30 percent of their total expenditure for the year.

This was higher than the P8 billion reported on the year in 2002.

Expenditures for education and agriculture development increased to

P10.17 billion from only P9.1 billion in 2002. Expenditures for health, education and population control also rose to P10.17 billion from P9.1 billion.

Despite the budget surplus posted by the country's LGU's, the consolidated public sector debt for 2003 rose to its highest level of P244.3 billion.

The 2003 consolidated public sector deficit was 1.1 percent higher than the P23.7 billion in 2002.

The higher deficit of the country's public sector was mainly attributed to the higher budget gap incurred by government-owned and controlled corporations.

Among the GOCCs included in the computation of the consolidated public sector deficit are the National Power Corp. (Napco) and the Philippine National Oil Co.

# RP to import 190,000T rice

THE PHILIPPINES will seek tenders on May 4 to buy up to 190,000 tons of rice originating from Thailand, Vietnam, China, or the United States, a senior official said last week.

The bulk requirement would bring to 450,000 tons the total volume sought by the Philippines, one of Asia's largest rice buyers, since February this year.

Gregorio Tan, Deputy Administrator of the National Food Authority (NFA), said his agency had planned to seek four tenders of just 140,000 tons for relief to 190,000 tons because supplies that were. The primary market are not expected to deliver their maximum total, one commentator.

In February, the NFA awarded its monthly procurement from the supply of a maximum 400,000 tons of rice for March to Asian suppliers.

"We expect suppliers in the February window to bid deliver 415,000 tons instead of 400,000 tons as prices have moved up," he said.

This said that under the terms of the NFA's tender, suppliers could either deliver 10 percent more or 10 percent less of the volume awarded to them.

Monetary suppliers rejected this month the NFA's proposal that they supply the bulk of the bulk requirement at the same rates and prices as the previous month.

NFA officials said the suppliers in the February window declined their proposed increase price have gone up by 10 to 20 per cent.

Monetary suppliers sold 25 percent less than the NFA in February at \$228.28 per ton CIF or \$228.50 per ton and 15 percent less than in \$230 per ton for March from deliveries.

This trading firms also sold 25 percent less than in the NFA last month at \$227.74 per ton CIF or \$227.75 per ton.

The Vietnamese suppliers who the NFA to supply 117,000 tons, while two trading firms—Sungai International Asia and NFA Group Inc.—were the tender to supply up to 10,000 tons.

The Philippines has estimated its rice deficit this year would reach between 500,000 tons and 700,000 tons.

It has allowed local farmers' groups to import as much as 100,000 tons this year as part of Manila's program to dismantle the NFA's rice import monopoly.

The country imported 304,000 tons in 2003, including 22,000 tons given by the UN government and 27,000 tons extended by Washington under a commodity loan.

# Solar lights up rural Mindanao

SOLAR electricity is now available to 72 baros in Mindanao.

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Electricity was provided to 17 baros in Tawi-Tawi, 13 in Sulu, and 10 in Maguindanao under the Alliance of Mindanao (AM) Renewable Energy Program.

There are now some 500 megawatts (MW) of solar power capacity in place around the world, enough to supply the annual energy needs of 300,000 households.

What power capacity totals about 7,000 MW to fuel 1.9 million homes, the number projected.

First, solar electricity has been common, raised about 35% when Philippine Solar (PS) last year launched its solar power program (PPV) technology to help small and big businesses.

More countries are now using this system, such as the United States, India, China, and others. (CNN) countries that pollute and lead up the atmosphere," explained PPV.

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LIFE *STYLE*

## How about going downtown once again?

**T**O FIND ways to get people back into our decaying city centers once again, Urban Partnerships Foundation is sponsoring the seminar "Reactivating Downtown: Challenges, Opportunities, Tolls and Techniques," on April 14.

The challenge to city denizens is to revitalize their cities

## PRIDE OF PLACE



Augusto E. Villalon

The one-day seminar focuses on the degradation of city centers all over the Philippines and attempts to find directions and solutions to revive them.

Remember the time when all roads led downtown? "Downtown" was each city's nerve center, its commercial hub where the

full range of retail, service and entertainment were located.

Demographic changes and new retail shopping preferences killed the growth of city centers. When people shifted to malls, the traditional city center slipped into a gradual decline until it lost its vibrance.

It eventually degenerated into a congested and traffic-stalled area, losing most of its

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IT'S redecoration time when tiles, handrails and a coat of paint resurrect a former no-man's land under the elevated railway tracks in Seventh Street Avenue and breathe new life in dingy neighbourhoods.



A ROW of palm-trees is kept as they allow the Thomas Mainie airwalk to come in 10 under the grandeur of the mangrove trees, which give the street its former name of *Somphob* Avenue.

How about going downtown once again?

**Management**

shopping and business activity to  
enhance a consumer's self-image.

Quito has lost much of its downtown-commercial activity in the new malls and business parks developed away from the city center, blowing away from the city center is a global trend.

As affluence increased, cars were readily available to take people away from dense city centers to their new suburban homes that were built close to large tracts surrounded by unconsolidated free parking lots.

Suburban living has become today's preferred lifestyle. People leave large shopping malls with department stores and banks, big supermarkets that usually are built close to business office centers. The days of the friendly neighborhood shops that were the trademark of the old downtowns simply disappeared.

A number of reasons caused the deterioration of the old downtown. Some reasons are natural, such as changes to the Mississippi river transport that was replaced by a railway system in the late 19th century.

In the 20th-century cities with river-dugged downtown streets that were not designed to accommodate today's traffic, our streets are inadequate and parking insufficient to accommodate the large number of cars we have today.

Other issues internal to the downtown area are the critical shortage of space and the high cost, leading businesses to move to outlying, more affordable locations.

Another factor is the lack of maintenance and proper zoning, as well as traffic congestion. City governments lack the financial means to effectively manage urban growth.

These events caused the mass movement of residents away from the city proper to new subdivisions in suburbs. With this move, Americans lost their primary function. They were no longer the retail centers. One by one, downtowns all over the world began to die.

### Recent trend

With the realization that the traditional downtown is now at a competitive disadvantage, the position of downtown redevelopment has emerged heavily within the past year (examples are the recent reorganization of Boston Redevelopment Authority, Thomas Moore's *Urbanism*).

Rehabilitation does not have to be done on a large scale. Communities can do small-scale projects such as simply clearing streets and alleys of garbage, street-fronts of additional parking space or repainting of buildings. These give a much-needed upgrading to the appearance of the city.

And as physical improvements are varied, so are the various sources of support. Some downstream revitalization programs successfully rely on local private initiatives, while local governments spearhead other efforts.

Other revitalisation projects represent a public-private co-operation effort, while others are strictly locally financed.

For further information, contact:

commending community efforts in revitalizing some streets in the University City of Manila, focusing on Vicente Reyes Street (formerly Briones).

Under the university's initiative, the building owners along the street are installing "snoozers" for attention. Together they have lobbied with City Hall to improve lighting on their street. Some of the building owners have voluntarily begun to repair up their buildings.

The townsmen is growing. New neighboring towns are following the example of the public school systems established by PSC.

### Synthetic example

One of the more controversial real-estate projects is the creation of the Pitt Street Mall in Sydney. Pitt Street, in central Sydney, was pedestrianized. New lighting and street furniture were installed. Commercial buildings were encouraged to refurbish and to reconfigure their lower floors into shop spaces.

Now, each building improvement, of with its neighbor on different levels, creating a world level small on either side of the street. Forty soon people were returning to the street for shopping and relaxation, participating the whole of the day around.

Tenacious crystallization produces a vitreous material in what once was a disordered state. Nevertheless, amorphous crystals arise throughout the day and night. People are drawn to some offering of a solid, more attractive and pleasant environment.

Private business enjoys the benefit of this transformation. Business gains from the increase of people returning to centralized downtowns. Retail sales increase, bringing a rise in real-estate occupancy and an increase in property values.

The benefits are not solely economic. A revitalized downtown re-establishes the recognition of the city center as a focal point for community life, where a mix of business, employment, cultural and shopping opportunities are found.

The one-day seminar will make an in-depth examination of our country's downtowns and find viable solutions to restore their lost vibrancy.

Myron Lho, secretary of the United and English People of Taping, are members present. Speakers include: from Kuala Lumpur, Yusoff bin Yusoff Development, Suburban Home and Central Country Station are also speaking.

Other participants are senior government officials from U.S. CI, FBIHQ, NMIC, DHS, and Reg. Ship Fund.

Aside from the Elhan Partnerships Foundation, sponsors include the Philippine Institute of Environmental Science, Nalco, a Red Cross Association and GE International Limited.

To register or to obtain further information, call Virginia Polytechnic at 804/261, 809 EXT.; fax 804/261; or e-mail [uplink@vt.edu](mailto:uplink@vt.edu)

E-mail the author at [qf@iuhethermail.com](mailto:qf@iuhethermail.com).

## LIFESTYLE

## A passion for Mindanao's poetic myths

By Christine Codines-Orraga  
PH Mindanao Bureau

**O**VER 30 years of intricate research and the guidance of local priests did the artist Pinesencio Estarte use his painting techniques using various media of latex, enamel, oil, watercolor, chalk and charcoal, interspersing Mindanao's myths and legends and, occasionally, religious subjects.

Besides Estarte's representational and narrative paintings on topical, socio-political issues, his more well-known works include two volumes of comic books, "Emanated Folk-

lore," published by Larzer University CO-3 with fellow artist Albert Jan from Zamboanga, the master is off of the "Biblical to Bible," two volumes of the "Coming of Christianity in Cagayan de Oro" and a portrait of St. Ignacio Loyola.

Now 53 years old and a recipient of a 1991 *Papal Award*, among others, for his body of work, he is currently curating an exhibition of his works at XU's Museo de Arte in Cagayan de Oro City.

At 5 years old, Estarte learned to draw from his parents and, later, from his grade school teachers in Malabon, Zamboanga del Sur.

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**PINESENCIO** Estarte's rendition of the mythical seven layers of Buddhist heaven, supported by two trees







# A jazzy Francophone evening



CANADIAN Embassy's Christopher Daniel and Robert Carver, Lisa Villeneuve's manager

IT WAS an evening of French lyrics, jazz standards and great conversation at the ballroom recently where French-Canadian singer Lisa Villeneuve performed.

A joint project of the Canadian Embassy and The Public in cooperation with Inter Communications, "Une Soirée en Jazz" was one of the highlights of the Le Jour de la Francophonie (International Day of the Francophone), an annual celebration of countries that share French as a common language.

Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland and wife Jo Lyne graced the occasion, as did dignitaries from the diplomatic corps. These included French Ambassador Pierre Veyres, Swiss Ambassador Lutz Frey, Austrian Ambassador Christian Siegel and the wife of the New Zealand Ambassador, Jan Baker.

Also seen enjoying the event were Canada's Chamber of Commerce governor Richard "Bouding" the French Embassy for Commerce and Cultural Affairs' (member French Hotel), General Manager (Hotel) and First As-



CANADIAN jazz singer- pianist Lisa Villeneuve with Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland and wife Jo Lyne, and Swiss Ambassador Lutz Frey at The Public



AUSTRIAN Ambassador Christian Siegel

social Jennifer Moray, and Alliance Française Director Philippe Beaumais.

Marie Rite, the Embassy of Switzerland's deputy head of mission, President of the Embassy of Portugal, Jean José Góthard of Embassy of Romania and Elizabeth Raymundo and Carla Figueroa of the Australian Embassy were also present.

Guests were treated to a performance by the Canadian Embassy's Christopher Daniel and Jo Lyne, together with The Public's partner from jazzed Philippe Villeneuve. In this setting, were on hand to welcome guests.

Lisa, charmed the audience with her talent, warmth and rich repertoire of original compositions, mostly in French. Her music gave the audience a glimpse of her personal experiences.

"Le Vieux Port" (The Old Port), the example, is about an encounter in Montreal, while "Chère Maman" (Dear Mother) is about choosing the musical dream.

She also sang about her journey "I'm Home" or "The Sunday's" and her "The Sunday's", long, classic love ("I'll be with you" or "The Sunday's"), the importance of love and friendship ("I'll be with you" or "The Sunday's"), and a farewell song to the audience ("I'll be with you" or "The Sunday's").

Lisa, who is from Alberta, was last year's first prize winner at the prestigious Toronto International de la Musique Francophone in Quebec, where she represented Canada.

The Francophone division were introduced in Montreal in collaboration with Alliance Française de Montréal and members of the Francophonie which have representatives in the Philippines. These include Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Egypt, Finland, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Laos, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.



FRENCH Ambassador Pierre Veyres (center from left) with Deputy Philippine country manager Jo Lyne, Alliance Française Director Philippe Beaumais and General Manager of the French Embassy



PHILIPPINE Ambassador Francisco Soto and his wife Jo Lyne



PHOTOGRAPHY Artist/Prints, Richard Borge and his wife Jo Lyne

## Japanese prints take the spotlight

UNIVERSITY Press and the Japan Foundation Manila office (JPMFO) presented the exhibit "Japanese Prints 1906-1996", which featured 75 prints (by 40 artists) from the Japan Foundation collection.

JPMFO assistant director (Manila) Joseph and Shingita (Manila) joined the other guests of honor to formally opening the exhibit, which drew to the art of various media, and, of course, was very new printmaking, headed by Philippine Association of Printmakers president, Richard Borge, and vice president, Jo Lyne.

In the opening were printmakers Mario Pardo and Beggie Torres, California, visual artist Richard Borge and Richard Borge, and photographer Jo Lyne, artist Maria Pardo, Jo Lyne, Gregor, brother of the artist, Richard Borge, Saturday Group president Richard Borge and Michael Borge, and sculptor Jo Lyne, Richard Borge and Beggie Torres.

Other guests were 2002, Madeline Borge and Richard Borge, Vicepresident (Japan Foundation) Jo Lyne, Japan Foundation's East Office with Jo Lyne's wife



PHOTOGRAPHY director Michael Borge and Vicepresident (Japan Foundation) Jo Lyne

knowledge and talent for their mastery of, and continued experimentation in, printmaking. Today's Japanese printmaking is recognized as one of the most innovative, expressive and versatile in the world. Since the 1950s, Japanese printmakers have been in numerous exhibitions, ac-

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